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A SLIPPERY SITUATION
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MEN'S BASKETBALL FLOUNDERS;
WOMEN'S TRIUMPH.



GALLERY PG. 6
HERE TO SERVE
AS STUDENTS HUSSE AND
BUSTLE AT THE START OF THE
SEMESTER VALLEY SERVICES
ARE PREPARED TO ASSIST.

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VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

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It's YOUR Newspaper

Financial Aid Available to Struggling Students

BY GREG KANDAHARIAN
STAFF WRITER

Struggling students need to look no further than Valley College's Financial Aid office for a variety of ways to help pay for their tuition. With aids such as loans, Cal Grant and the BOG fee waiver, students can apply for aid, and sometimes find out if they're eligible in a matter of minutes.

Located between the Campus Center building and the North Gym, near the tennis courts, the financial aid office is open for all students who need assistance.

"We're here to help," said Graciela Cabrera, who helps students at the Financial Aid office. "People can come here and we'll help them do anything from filling out their FAFSA online to checking their financial aid status."

In order to receive first priority in financial aid, students must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 2 and submit all required documents by May 1. A few of the requirements students must meet in order to be considered for financial aid include being

a U.S. citizen, a California resident and having a high school diploma.

The Board of Governors Enrollment Fee Waiver (BOG) is another useful financial service provided to students at Valley. If eligible, students can have their enrollment fees waived with BOG for a fee of \$1 within five minutes of applying. BOG fee waivers are more readily dispersed to students because in order to receive future funding from the Board of Governors, Valley must expend all of its funding from the previous year.

One of the biggest concerns is for students who are eligible for one or more of these grants and do not take advantage of them. Financial Aid officers urge students to stop by the office and check their status for eligibility on Cal Grants, BOG fee waivers, and scholarships.

"If it weren't for financial aid I wouldn't be coming to school," said Grikor Odjakhian. "How do you think I can afford books?"

The Financial Aid office is open Monday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. and closed on Fridays.

Cafeteria Under New Ownership, No Longer Costing Campus

■ The Valley College cafeteria has a new owner after losing more than \$600,000 in three years.

BY SEDA TERZYAN
STAFF WRITER

Monarch Square has been a busy place so far this semester with crowds of passing students gathering around three yellow boards, some filling out forms and others reading through them looking for books.

The boards are there as part of the book exchange program, through which students interested in buying or selling their textbooks can do so by stopping by the boards in Monarch Square and filling out a form. The simple form requires you to put the book title, the course it applies to, the author, price and condition. You then put your name and contact information

and wait for a reply.

The program, which led to the sale of 32 books on its first day, Feb. 6, had more than 300 posts in its first two days and has been a helpful tool for many students.

"It was extremely easy," said electronics major Luis Porres. "You're able to talk to who's buying it and can get a little more money than selling it to the bookstore."

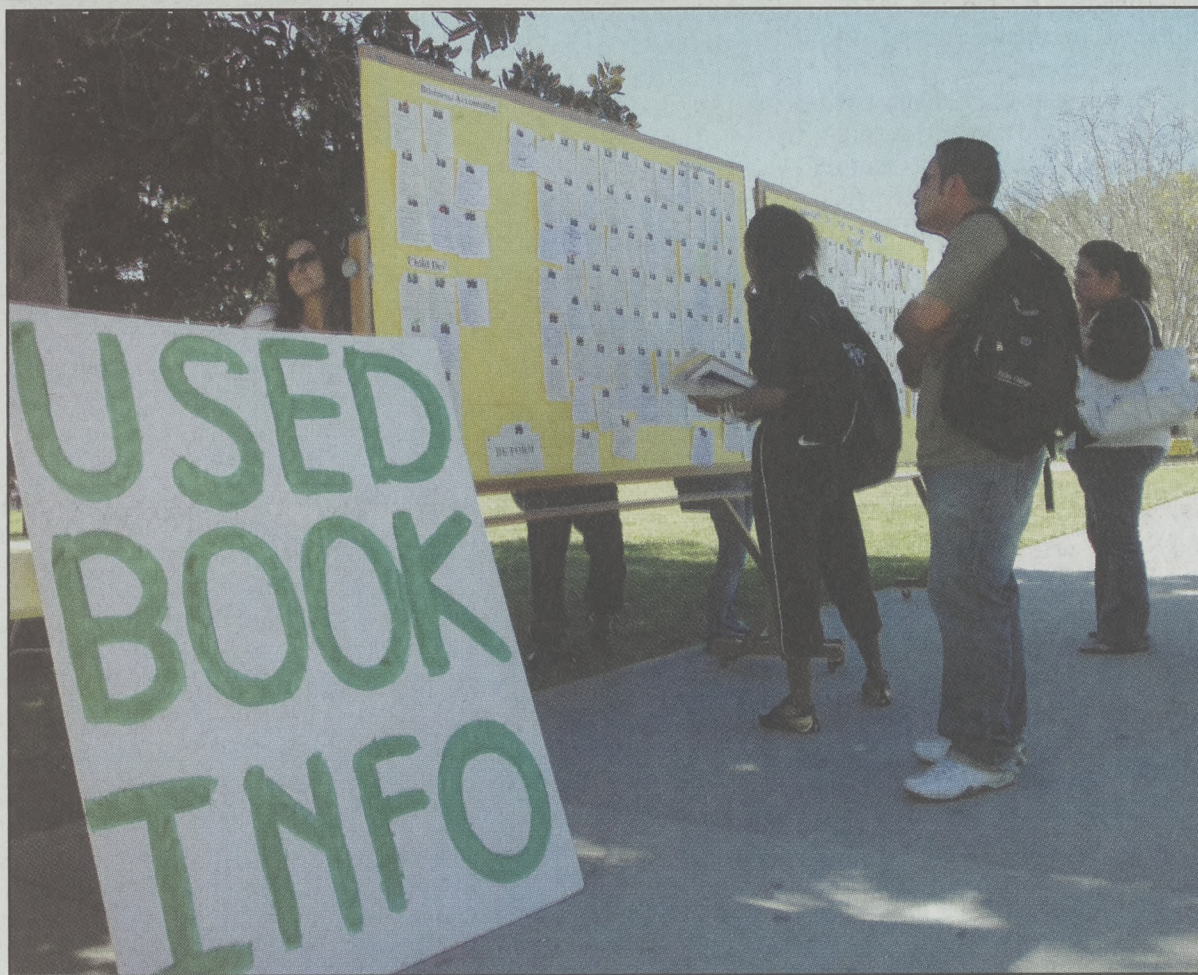
The program was created by the Associated Student Union to give Valley College students the opportunity to directly buy, trade and sell books to each other. The program began during the Fall 2005 semester and

see 'Cafeteria' page 3



DANIEL KANE / VALLEY STAR

SLICE OF LIFE - Marshall Wexler's Deli Depot and More has taken the place of the former vendors at Valley and has already started to turn up profits. Wexler credits his success to being in-tune with student needs.



MELANIE SALDAÑA / VALLEY STAR

SOLD - Students peruse offerings at the Associated Student Union-sponsored used book sale held at Monarch Square. The program will remain in Monarch Square until Feb. 17, and then will be moved inside Campus Center across from room CC102, ending Feb. 27.

Book Program Draws Students

BY WILL REYES
STAFF WRITER

Monarch Square has been a busy place this week with crowds of passing students gathering around two yellow boards, some filling out forms and others reading through them looking for books.

The boards are there as part of the book exchange program created by the ASU to give Valley College students the opportunity to directly buy, trade and sell books to each other. The program began during the Fall 2005 semester and was the first project organized by the current ASU.

"The [book exchange] is a direct sign of the [ASU] making an impact on students' lives," said ASU President Nelli Martirosyan. "This is what the ASU is for, it's our job to serve the students."

Through the book exchange students interested in buying or selling their textbooks can do so by stopping by the boards in Monarch Square and filling out a form. The simple form requires you to put the book title, the course it applies to, the author, price and condition. You then put your name and contact information and wait for a reply.

The program, which led to the sale of 32 books on its first day, Feb. 6, had over 300 posts in its first two days, nearly surpassing last semester's total number of 350 posts, and has been a helpful tool for many students.

"It was extremely easy," said electronics major Luis Porres. "You're able to talk to who's buying it and can get a little more money than selling it to the bookstore."

Martirosyan said the idea was a big part of her election campaign and felt the program, which had never been done before, was important for the ASU to offer to Valley students.

"Everyone has to buy books," Martirosyan said. "Some are more expensive than tuition, and I've personally seen students happy with the [book exchange]...so I feel satisfied that I have done what I promised."

For a number of financially strapped college students the combination of the printing of new editions, instructors changing books and the low buyback rates at the bookstore left them with little options for breaking even until the book exchange came about.

"I sold my books the day I posted them," said philosophy

major Joshua Renfro. "I used the book exchange because the bookstore doesn't always buy back books missing the CD, something most students don't even use. I can sell below the bookstore's used price...and still offer a fair price to the buying student."

As a result of its success, the ASU is going to amend its bylaws to officially include the book exchange on an elected officer's job description, a move that ensures it will remain in effect long after the current ASU moves on.

"The feedback has been very good from students, faculty and staff," Martirosyan said. "We want to leave the book exchange here as a legacy for the ASU and our school."

The program, which will run for a total of one month during the spring semester, is going to remain in Monarch Square until Feb. 17, and then will be moved inside Campus Center across from room CC102 for the remaining two weeks, ending on February 27.

Students interested in taking advantage of the book exchange can visit the boards for more information or contact an ASU officer at 947-2361.

Scholarship Deadlines Approach

■ With 180 scholarships worth more than \$100,000 available, students have only a couple weeks left to apply.

BY KRISTEN BECKER
STAFF WRITER

For many students, the most stressful part of college is not grades or tests, but finding out how to pay for their education.

The Patrons Association, a non-profit organization that raises money for Valley College, offers about 180 scholarships ranging from \$250 to \$1000.

"The foundation is projected to give out \$100,000 in schol-

arships," said Raul Castillo, executive director of the Patrons Association.

Some of the scholarships, such as the Dr. Tyree Wieder Student Scholarship, are available to all students. Others, such as the Max L. Heyman Perpetual Scholarship for history students, are available only to students studying a particular subject.

Anyone who is interested in applying should get applications soon because some of the scholarships require transcripts, letters of recommendation or essays. March 3 is the deadline to apply for most of the scholarships.

Jackie Lima, the Patrons Association scholarship coordinator, is also a Valley alumna

and a recent graduate of UC Santa Cruz. During her time at Valley, she received scholarships, including the Emily Gunning Scholarship and the Ganas Scholarship.

"If a student is willing to put some time and effort into [the application process], it is easy," Lima said. "Students are losing out because no one's applying."

Applications are available in the Patrons Association office, which is located in the Administration Building, Room 100. The staff is available to help students select the scholarships best for them. Scholarships will be awarded May 18 at a ceremony for the recipients.

Support System Helps Students Learn

■ From writing help to health services Valley has the recipe to succeed.

BY MARC HOWARD
STAFF WRITER

There are a number of services available at Valley College that help to ease the transition into the semester and offer support to students throughout the semester.

One of the most daunting tasks for many students is writing. The Writing Center, located in the Humanities building, room 101 and 102, offers tutoring and many other services to help students get the pen moving and improve their writing. One on one tutoring sessions are available as well as group workshops. Writing Center tutor/coordinator Scott Weigand encourages students of any skill level of writing ability to take advantage of the Writing Center's services.

"Students seem to think that being tutored suggests deficiency in your writing," Weigand said. "That's not necessarily the case. Regardless of your skill level, having someone to read your work and offer opinions on it can be very valuable."

Also located in the in the Writing Center is the Resource Library, which offers a wide range of reference books to help students with their writing, and a computer lab where free computer services are available.

The Writing Center also houses the STARS program, a forum for students and faculty to meet and discuss issues concerned with education.

The Writing Center is open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday.

Students who would like individual tutoring can also go to the Learning Center, located next to the Lab for Academic & Instructional Resources (LAIR), on the south side of the Library building. The Learning Center offers tutoring in a variety of disciplines including math, science, social sciences, child development and humanities. Required viewing materials for some classes are available for viewing in the Center.

The Lion's Den is Valley's most popular student hangout. It's located north of Monarch Hall, inside the cafeteria building. Students can play pool or air hockey or just lounge and watch television on the Lion

see 'Services' page 3

Starting Monday, Students Must Have a Parking Pass to Park in Student Lots

So tell us what's on your mind! Contact The Valley Star at thevalleystar@yahoo.com, drop by the newsroom at BJ114 or call us at (818) 947-2576. Letters should be limited to 300 words and may be edited for publication.

The First Cut is the Deepest

■ New budget cuts funding to federal student loans by \$12.7 billion.

BY KRISTEN BECKER
STAFF WRITER

Education has been a top priority in my life since I was a child. When the time came for me to go to college, the grants and student loans I received from the federal government allowed me to continue my education.

President Bush's cuts to federal student loan programs will make the difficult process of finding money for college even harder.

Although the cost of a college education has increased consistently (tuition was raised at least once a year all four years I attended UC Santa Cruz), Congress approved the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005.

The bill will cut \$12.7 billion from federal student loans.

This budget bill includes the largest cuts to student loan programs in history.

According to the College Board, a non-profit association of more than 5,000 schools, colleges and universities, the cost of tuition for a private university rose to \$21,235.

Students saw a 5.9 percent increase from the year before. The average tuition at a four-year public university is \$5,491. This is a 7.1 percent increase from the previous year. Two-year public colleges saw an increase of 5.4 percent to \$2,191.

As higher education becomes more expensive, a larger portion of college students will need financial assistance. The cost of higher education could discourage less affluent students from attending college.

As tuition gets more expensive, funding for federal financial aid should be increased not cut.

In his State of the Union speech, President Bush acknowledged that education is an important part of American society. "Our greatest advantage in the world has always been our educated, hard-working ambitious people and we're going to keep that edge." In the same speech, the president said, "This year my budget will cut [the federal deficit] again and reduce or eliminate more than 140 programs that are performing poorly or not fulfilling essential priorities."

By Bush's admission, educated citizens are necessary for American economic success. If that is the case, any program that enables more people to go to college must then be an essential priority.

In the proposed budget for 2007, the president wants to cut the Perkins loan program, which, according to the U.S. Department of Education, provides "a low-interest loan for both undergraduate and graduate students with financial need."

I understand the importance of cutting the federal deficit, but I object to the fact that the lower and middle classes are those who have to make the most sacrifices.

President Bush stated that his goal in reducing funding to such a vital program is to cut the federal deficit, yet in the same budget, he proposes \$70 billion in tax cuts. If the president were serious about lowering the deficit, he would understand that sacrifices have to be made by everyone and not only the people who can least afford them.

The High Price of Oil Addiction

■ Is fueling up at the pump worth our country's sacrifices?

BY SEDA TERZYAN
STAFF WRITER

America's fierce addiction to oil has driven this country to take drastic measures to satisfy its unquenchable need. This addiction must be broken along with America's intense dependence on Middle Eastern oil.

More than 30 percent of U.S. oil and petroleum imports come from Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait, according to trade analysts. These unstable and potentially unsafe countries have contributed to the high prices of oil, which are destroying our economy and challenging the budgets of many families.

The cost of depending on these regions of the world is the high price of maintaining a military to keep the oil safe and flowing. Measures must be taken to cut back this reliance on foreign oil and work to localize American sources of energy through technology already at our disposal. Oil is not worth the monumental sacrifices this country appears to be making, nor is it worth the well being of our entire planet.

"America is addicted to oil," said President Bush during the State of the Union Address. Yes, America is addicted to oil; I guess the first step is admitting that you have a problem, but then what's next?

Making generalized statements about alternative forms of energy will not work until America first dramatically cuts down its oil intake. The way to do this is to start small by pushing for fuel-efficient cars. The government should push car production companies to making only hybrid vehicles, powered by both gasoline and electricity.

Then slowly, they can be powered only by electricity and hydrogen. If this were achieved on a grand scale it would cut our oil needs down significantly. Then work can be done to localize American energy using wind, solar and nuclear energy instead of burning fossil fuels. Cars, especially SUVs, are the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, which cause global warming. Mother Nature never wastes anything, nor does it tolerate having too much of something. The excess of greenhouse gases is causing global warming.

Global warming is a process that will allow the Earth to once again come into equilibrium with its natural gasses. The ice caps will melt, causing the sea level to rise. This will cause catastrophic flooding and tremendous rains. The result: a major atmospheric clean up will have taken place, restoring balance at the expense of coast lining land masses, according to environmental studies.

Just because something may not happen tomorrow, does not mean that nothing should be done today.

America is only 5 percent of the world's population and it uses a quarter of the world's oil. The only people enjoying the American addiction to oil are the oil companies.



ILLUSTRATION BY JESUS ESQUIVEL / VALLEY STAR

Henry Ford once said, "Show me who makes a profit from war, and I'll show you how to stop a war."

I think we all know who is turning out the profits from the current American war in Iraq. These oil empires need to be shut down, and the only way to do so is to stop depending on them. If the people push for the organization of the government, changes can be made to break our oil addiction.

If we don't, it is bound to break us.

Ignorance should never be willingly chosen, we need to stop complaining and start making a difference, we are the future of this country and it's up to us, the youth, to clean up the mess made by those before us.

Poking, Prodding, Provoking

■ Should the west play nice?

BY BRIAN DEAN
STAFF WRITER

Forget the free speech defense.

Forget the useless comparisons to how Christians or Jews would react in the same situation.

The fact is although violence is wrong and certainly won't get them any closer to an apology, Muslims have the right to be beyond outraged.

And the real question is why the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten (The Jutland Post) chose to run the offending drawings at all.

Some people don't care if their statements insult other people, and often they do it intentionally. These kind of people will never be deterred in their efforts.

And though there should never be any law passed that resembles censorship of such offensive material, responsible editors should exercise their good judgment and deny the publication of anything gratuitously insulting.

From a sheer lack of understanding of Islamic culture, the depiction of the prophet Muhammad with a bomb in his turban was thought to be taken in stride; with a hearty chuckle and a witty, self-deprecating comment about contrasting civilizations.

But it's now widely evident that Islam is taken very seriously by its followers.

For them, it's not just religion. It's everything.

Government, lessons for life, and the path to salvation.

To the average American, it would be similar to equating George Washington, Jesus and Dr. Phil to terrorists.

In a world increasingly divided along religious lines, a world captivated by America's "war on terror" in nations that are almost entirely Islamic, this cartoon controversy couldn't have come at a worse time.

We feel the need to reassure people that the Western world is not in a war against Islam.

But despite this attempt at sensitivity, yet another slight to Muslims emerges from the Christian West.

Jyllands-Posten, which identifies itself as a right-wing newspaper, rejected cartoons ridiculing Jesus three years ago.

In an e-mail from the paper's Sunday editor, Jens Kaiser, Danish illustrator Christoffer Zieler was told, "they will provoke an outcry."

Stating also that he did not believe the readers would enjoy them, Kaiser rejected the drawings.

This kind of double standard makes it easier to believe Islam itself is the target, and that there are agents' provocateurs in every corner.

Publishing these cartoons comes close to inciting violence, knowing the instability of the relationship between the West and the vast majority of the Islamic world who are not terrorists.

Perhaps some self-censorship, knowing when and how far to push the envelope, is all we can hope for.

Without Warrant ...

■ Does domestic wiretapping protect our freedom or take it away?

BY MARC HOWARD
STAFF WRITER

It's amazing to see President Bush, Vice President Cheney and Attorney General Gonzales suggesting that the Bush Administration's secret wiretapping program is legal.

There's no way around it; the law does now allow the government to tap phones without proper warrants.

It's as simple as that.

"Anytime you hear the United States government talking about wiretapping," Bush told the American people in 2004, "a wiretap requires a court order."

He went on to say, "Nothing has changed ... when we're talking about chasing down terrorists, we're talking about getting a court order before we do so."

The president had actually authorized the warrantless tapping of phones two years prior to making this statement.

Cheney said, "We are [wiretapping] in accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the United States and it ought to be supported."

The vice president argues that the wiretapping program is justified to protect Americans. He's under the misguided impression that the administration's intentions are what determine the legality of their actions.

The fourth Amendment is clear on the issue: Citizens are protected against search and seizure without a warrant and probable cause.

The Justice Department argues that Bush has the inherent power to mount warrantless sur-

veillance in a time of war.

I reject that argument.

To accept it would be to accept that the president has the discretion to decide when it is prudent to follow the law and when it is not.

Democracy simply does not function that way.

In defending the domestic spying program at last week's congressional hearings on the issue, Gonzales said, "It is the modern equivalent to a scout team sent ahead to do reconnaissance or a series of radar outposts designed to detect enemy movements. As with all wartime operations, speed, agility, and secrecy are essential to its success."

The Foreign Intelligence Security Act states that if there's an emergency situation, the government can go ahead and wiretap someone without warrant, but they have to go to a court after doing so. The administration failed to notify the FISA courts of any of the domestic wiretaps it had conducted under the new program.

So what are they hiding from the courts?

FISA was enacted because of decades of abuses of executive power and questionable surveillance of dissenters the government felt represented a threat to the established order.

These dissenters included war protesters during the Vietnam era and civil rights groups and activists including Martin Luther King.

There is no question that the government needs to be kept on its leash.

A government unchecked by law is a dictatorship.

By no means is America that, but we take a step in that direction when our government breaks the law and we fail to hold them accountable.

Campus View

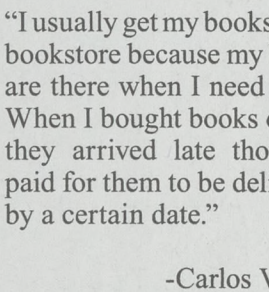
How did you purchase your textbooks?

PHOTOS BY MELANIE SALDAÑA



"I buy online, from classmates and used from the bookstore. This is the first time getting books this (ASU Used Book Program) way. Mostly I buy online. The price is good and I get my books on time."

-Riho Shiraishi
Theater Arts



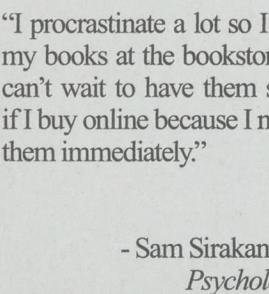
"I usually get my books at the bookstore because my books are there when I need them. When I bought books online they arrived late though I paid for them to be delivered by a certain date."

-Carlos Virgen
Engineering



"I usually buy online. It's 50 percent cheaper than the bookstore and my books always arrive on time. The bookstore is much more expensive and there aren't always used books available."

-Myriam Lemailloux
Pre-law



"I procrastinate a lot so I get my books at the bookstore. I can't wait to have them sent if I buy online because I need them immediately."

-Sam Sirakanyan
Psychology

News

3

'Books'

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was the first project organized by the current ASU.

"The [book exchange] is a direct sign of the [ASU] making an impact on students' lives," said ASU President Nelli Martirosyan. "This is what the ASU is for, it's our job to serve the students."

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tion, a move that ensures it will remain in effect long after the current ASU moves on.

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SE HABLA ESPANOL

'Services'

continued from page 1

Den's big screen TV. There are also 25 Internet-ready computers available; students can print out papers, study or do homework there. The Lion's Den's hours are Monday 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday noon to 7:30 p.m. and Wednesday 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The LAIR is another place you can access the Internet, do research and get printing done. There are more than 40 computers for student use; the LAIR's hours are Monday through Thursday 8 a.m. to 8:45 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Health services are also available to students at the Health Center, located behind Monarch Hall, just east of the financial aid building. Among the many services available at the Health Center at no cost are first aid, urgent care, physical exams, breast exams, and blood pressure,

vision and STD screenings. Lab tests and immunizations are also available at reduced cost. You can visit the Health Center Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Wednesday 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Associated Student Union book exchange program, which began last semester, is available to help students avoid the high prices of the student bookstore.

"I bought a got a book through the program that costs \$100 in the bookstore for \$40. Later I sold it for \$30," said ASU Vice President Gayane Markosyan, who helps to coordinate the program also takes advantage of it.

You can check for postings of available text books or place a posting of a book that you want to sell on the book exchange program's posting boards which can usually be located in Monarch Square near the Northwest corner of Monarch

Hall. If the boards are not there they can be found in Monarch Hall, across from CC 102. Students can exchange books through Feb. 27.

Students can also save money on books through EOPS (Extended Opportunity Program and services), which is located on the north side of the Campus Center. Students enrolled in 12 or more units who apply may be eligible to receive money for books through the program. EOPS also offers academic counseling, tutoring and university transfer assistance, among other services.

The counseling department, located in the admissions building, has Counselors available to help students plan their academic paths Monday through Thursday 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

More detailed information on many of the services as well as a number of other Valley services and programs are available on Valley's website, www.lavc.edu.

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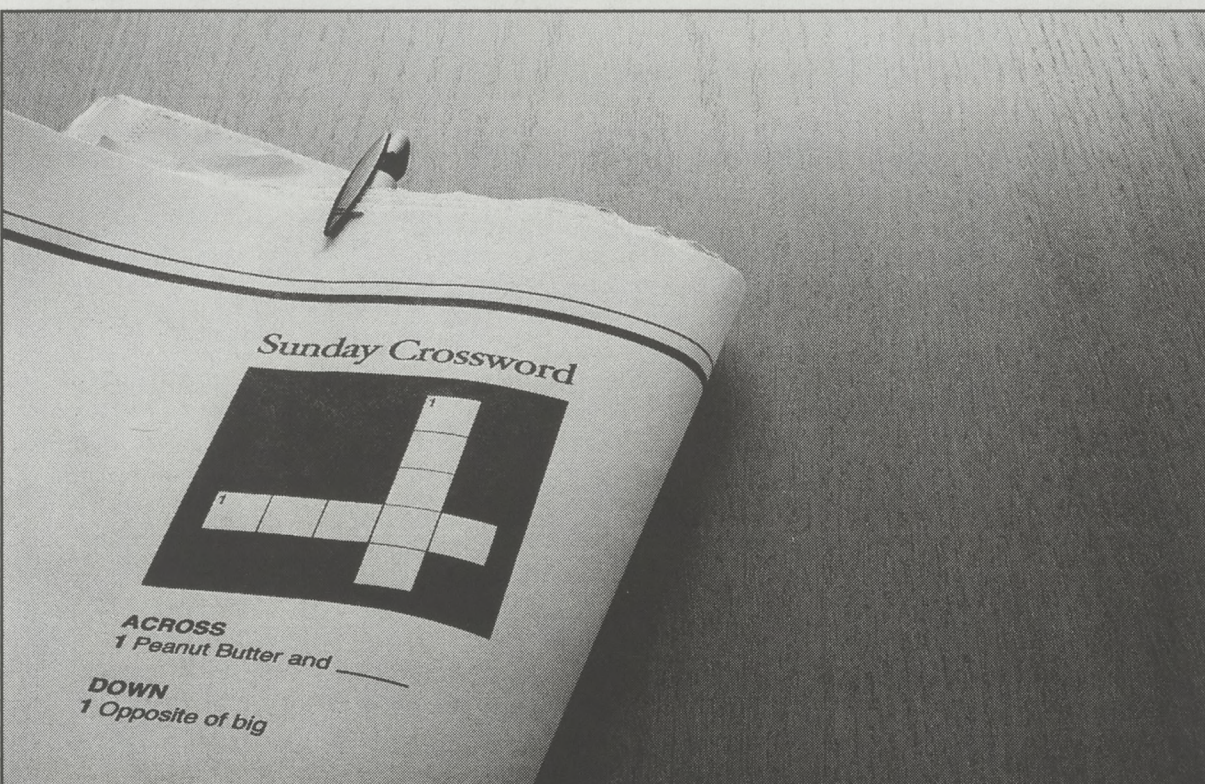


University of Colorado at Denver
and Health Sciences Center
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Black History is Observed in February The Pan African Film & Arts Festival

To Present & Showcase The Broad Spectrum Of Black Creative Works

http://www.paff.org/html/student_fest



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Visit www.scif.com/careers

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WEDNESDAY TO TUESDAY

Wednesday, Feb. 15



Eve Light Honthamer presents and signs "Hollywood Drive:

What It takes to break in, hang in and make it in the Entertainment Industry" Book Soup, 8818 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood; 7 p.m. free (310) 659-3110

Thursday, Feb. 16



Doris A. Hamburg, discusses recent project to conserve the

Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. 1200 Getty Center Dr., Los Angeles, 7 p.m. free, reservation required (310) 440-7300

Friday, Feb. 17



39th California International Antiquarian Book Fair

Century Plaza Hotel 2025 Avenue of the Stars, Los Angeles, \$10, \$15 three day pass, www.labookfair.com



Movie Releases:

"Freedom Land" (R)
"Second Chance" (PG-13)
"Winter Passing" (R)
"Date Movie" (PG-13)

Sunday, Feb. 19

Los Angeles Comic Book and Science Fiction Convention, Shrine Auditorium Expo Center 700 West 32nd St. Los Angeles, \$8 (818) 954-8432

Monday, Feb. 20



Listing Ship
The Echo 1822 Sunset Blvd. Echo Park, 8:30 p.m., free 21+ www.attheecho.com

Tuesday, Feb. 21



DVD Releases:

"North Country" (R)
"The Weather Man" (R)
"Rent" (PG-13)
"All The President's Men" (R)
"Midnight Cowboy" (X)

Career/Transfer Center

Wednesday, Feb. 15
UC Fall Application Updates Due
www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions.apupdate

Thursday, Feb. 16
CSUN Rep. 5-7 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 21
UC Financial Aid Workshop 1:30 p.m.

UCLA Financial Aid
Appointments
2:30-4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 22
Black Heritage Celebration
presented by the BSU and ASU at Monarch Square 11-2 p.m.

MOVIE REVIEW

Bubbling With Boredom

"Bubble"

Director: Steve Soderbergh
Features: Debbie Doebereiner and Misty Wilkins

★★ out of 5

BY MARCO ELORREAGA
STAFF WRITER

"Bubble" is the newest film from director Steven Soderbergh, the man who brought us films like "Traffic," "Erin Brockovich" and the "Ocean's Eleven" films, takes a break from mainstream Hollywood to exorcise his independent spirit.

Soderbergh has helmed many independently filmed movies before, such as his classic "Sex, Lies, and Videotape" and the star-studded "Full Frontal." With "Bubble," Soderbergh tries something new, though — he releases the film simultaneously in theaters, DVD and cable, making it accessible to anyone — but does it work?

With the recent boom in the home entertainment industry (HDTVs and DVDs) and the decline in theater attendance, there has been a shift in the dynamics of how people like to view their movies. Soderbergh takes advantage of this fact and films the movie entirely on digital video, with non-actors and a budget of \$1.6 million. The result? A movie no one has heard of, and maybe for the better.

The film centers on three characters working at a doll factory and living their mundane

lives from paycheck to paycheck. Martha (Debbie Doebereiner) is a middle-aged, overweight, doll-faced woman who develops an odd and dependant friendship with her coworker, Kyle (Dustin Ashley), but whether it is a mutual friendship is always in question.

The friendship is disrupted by a young, single-mother, Rose (Misty Wilkins), who is hired at the doll factory when a giant toy order is placed. Sparks fly between Kyle and Rose despite Martha's disapproval. Soon, the foundation of their friendship seems to be jeopardized and what appears to be a regular day in a small Ohio town turns out to be a revelation for each character.

The revelation of this film is the making of it. Soderbergh and writer, Coleman Hough, have great faith in their actors. Where story structure lacks, the actors make up with their performances. They give the film a realistic touch of Middle America. But this might also be the problem. With the direction of Soderbergh, the actors don't engage in complete random, everyday conversation, but manage to drag out 73 minutes of monotonous dialogue with intervals of the blaring guitars that make up the score.

While the DVD special features are enlightening, especially the "Making-of Featurette" and the Higher Definition interview with Soderbergh, the movie seems more like an experiment worth analyzing than a movie to entertain. In other words, this "Bubble" is burst.



Rubber Doll Arts - In the assembly line of monotony; making the same thing everyday.

A Message From The Star's Editor In Chief

BY TAMMY FUNICELLO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Dear Readers,

I am Tammy Funicello, the spring 2006 editor in chief of the Valley Star, your newspaper.

The Star is here to serve the campus by providing the most important news about what affects us as students.

I am a 20-year-old journalism major who is looking forward to a great and productive semester. This is my sixth semester at Valley College and fourth writing for the Star. Last spring, I served as the valley life editor.

We are publishing in the second week to inform you about the pressing issues for new students. In this issue, you will find stories about scholarships, financial aid, the book exchange program and services available to students on campus, such as counseling and writing help.

The Star will publish almost every Wednesday, so look for it at stands around Valley to find out about the campus and beyond.

If students have any questions, concerns or story suggestions, I am available by email at thevalleystar@yahoo.com and by phone at (818) 947-2868. We invite readers' responses and plan to print your letters on our opinion page. I hope to hear from you soon.



TAMMY FUNICELLO



Art Walls Can Talk - Los Angelenos look at wall of colorful artwork by Dr. Allen Bearden at the NoHo Gallery L.A., on display now.

DANIEL KANE / VALLEY STAR

Black Arts at NoHo Gallery

■ NoHo Gallery L.A. celebrates black history month with an art exhibit highlighting black culture.

BY MARC HOWARD
STAFF WRITER

Art lovers filled the NoHo Gallery L.A. in North Hollywood last Tuesday night to view "The Black Arts," an exhibit showcasing an assorted array of culturally themed work by numerous artists.

The exhibit, which will be showing through Feb. 26, features paintings, drawings, jewelry and sculptures that celebrate the richness of Black American and African culture.

Some of the more impressive work in the show belongs to Toni Scott, a painter, photographer and sculptress, whose elegant pieces affectionately examine the striking features of the distinctly African face: the broad nose, thick lips, and dark skin. Her sculpture "Mangbetu Warrior," a bust of an African female warrior, articulates dignity and inner strength in a way

that the art of sculpture can.

Scott stresses that creating pieces like this one is not easy, even for a seasoned artist like herself.

"Trying to bring life to a dream is a very complicated process," she says. "Sometimes the finished work measures up; sometimes it doesn't. However, when it does, it's very rewarding."

Jimmy Cross, a cartoonist turned painter, has been putting the brush to canvas for about a year. This is surprising given the deftness with which he is able to infuse his work with both humor and black pride at once. His oil paintings are given strength by their brilliant colors. The irony in that he depicts African warriors in a cartoon-like style. These pieces include "Ready for Battle," "Zulu Fighter" and "War Dance." In each of these pieces one or two African warriors stare at the viewer, holding spear and shield.

"I started painting to express myself on another level," Cross said. "With animation you're kind of limited. When I paint, no one can tell me what to do. That's all me."

There is quite a bit of pho-

tography on display including impressive work by gallery director Dan DeBevoise and sensual figure studies by Gregory Prescott.

Marci Hill's photographs document what she saw while in Nairobi, Kenya while doing humanitarian work. The stills capture the beautiful faces of Kenyan children as well as the ugly face of the poverty in which they live. Marci is modest despite the impressiveness of her work.

"I don't consider myself a great photographer, but it's become more of a passion since I've started traveling."

A number of other formidable artists are represented in the exhibit, too many to name here. Art connoisseurs as well as casual art fans would be well-served to make the trip to NoHo to see what the gallery is showing.

Gallery hours are Thursday through Saturday from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Admission is free. NoHo Gallery L.A. (818) 761-7784
www.nohogalleryla.com.

Cafe Serves More Than Just Coffee

■ Cafe in Sylmar doubles as community center.

BY JESUS ESQUIVEL
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Tia Chucha's Café Cultural delivers a shot of community service stronger than any espresso Starbucks serves.

After expanding in 2003 to become a non-profit learning and cultural arts center in Sylmar, Tia Chucha's has been hosting art exhibits, workshops in music, readings, dance lessons, performances and film showcases, as well as being a bookstore with a full coffee bar.

Next door to the café is the non-profit center where the Tia Chucha Press has published 35 poetry books and a CD. Dos Manos Records, which started in 2002 and has produced CDs of poetry and music and Xispas, an online magazine that features community artists and writers, both work out of the center.

"It's about giving back to the community," said co-owner Luis Rodriguez. "It costs a lot of money to run this place, but when the kids come here and learn, that's what makes it worth while."

Rodriguez, best known for his international best seller "Always Running," opened the café with his wife Maria Trinidad Rodriguez and long-time activist Enrique Sanchez in 2001.

"We opened it here because



Tia Chucha's Cafe Cultural - Maria Trinidad Rodriguez, co-founder and manager, stands at the register on a calm day at the cafe.

ALEX FAYVIL / VALLEY STAR

there isn't anything out here," Rodriguez said shaking his head. "There isn't even a mall or theater; people have to drive to Hollywood or Northridge to catch a movie."

"No one would expect a place like this here, this is a working community. Barnes and Noble wouldn't touch this place with a 10-foot pole."

Rodriguez feels that in a town where every corner has a 99 Cents store or a taco stand, Tia Chucha's is an anomaly, providing community services and a venue for the community's musicians inside a coffee bar slash bookstore.

Tia Chucha's live music events are awesome sights. Bands set up in the back corner near the colorful art gallery and just to the side of a long bookshelf. Not a common set up, but the venue still

draws crowds.

"I've seen that place get so packed that all the windows fog up," said local musician Robert Flores.

Performances are always diverse. They cater to all tastes by hosting punk rock, folk, alternative, world music and everything else that's out there.

This Saturday at 5 p.m., Tia Chucha's will celebrate its fourth anniversary with live music, poetry readings, Aztec dances, a raffle and free food.

12737 Glenoaks Blvd., #22
Sylmar, CA 91342
(818) 362-7060
www.tiachucha.com

SPORTS

5

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Role Reversal – Men Dethroned as Kings of Valley

■ Valley teams lose at Bakersfield; Men's season will end, but women's will continue.

BY NICK SANTONI
STAFF WRITER

For the past 10 seasons the men's basketball team has enjoyed the prestige and the accolades. They finished either first or second in the Western Conference, including state championship honors from 2000-03. But good things can always come to an end. And falling to 3-8 in the conference after a tough 63-58 loss to Bakersfield on Saturday means the Monarchs will miss the playoffs for the first time in 11 seasons, and finish near the conference cellar. Fortunately for Valley basketball fans, the women's team has picked up where the men left off. Even though the Lady Monarchs also lost to Bakersfield over the weekend, 85-69, the women are playoff bound, and they have an 8-3 conference record to show for it.

"This team has matured so much," said women's head coach Ruth Seja on her team's performance this year. "Our defense has really kept the team in a lot of games this year. If we keep

our heads and continue to play hard, we'll go far."

This new switch in success could not have been more evident than in last Wednesday's games versus Santa Monica. The women would pull out a 71-66 victory over the Corsairs; the men would stumble again, losing 94-84.

Leading the way for the Lady Monarchs all season has been point guard Saida Johnson. And this game was no exception. Johnson lit up SMC for 28 points – slashing her way to the hoop, and creating high-percentage shots in the paint. With other guard Laquisha Samuel, Valley's frontcourt dictated the tempo for the majority of the 40-minute contest.

Employing a backcourt-trap defense midway through the first half paid immediate dividends.

"The turning point of the game was when we applied the press," said the talented 5-foot-3 Johnson. "From how we started the year in preseason, I couldn't have envisioned this type of improvement. We're playing well, and we have grown as a team."

I wish the same could be said for the men. Instead, they had their hands full.

"This was our last gasp," said men's head coach Kenny Williams following the defeat to SMC. "We came out flat and lazy. We didn't play a real good team game, and this has been the method to our madness all season long."

The opposite could be said for Santa Monica College. The Corsairs came out looking to be aggressive, and were, feeding the ball into the post for 6-foot-9 center Shakir Johnson to do work. Johnson dominated the low post all game long, and led all scorers with 32 points. In addition, Johnson was a huge defensive presence. He was able to alter many of the Monarch drives to the basket with his shot-blocking ability, and as a result the Monarchs had to settle for jump shots and a perimeter game.

Freshman guard Charles Streater would contribute 23 points, and forward Kevin Thomas wasn't far behind with 18 of his own for the Monarchs, but Valley's lack of defense would be their undoing.

"We didn't start with the energy we need to have," said a frustrated Streater. "We just collapsed."

Although the men will have an off-season sooner than they may have liked, perhaps the success on the other side of the gymnasium will refuel their passion and desire come next season. Let us hope that their egos are not too bruised. After all, the women's team appears packed with talent. Besides Johnson, the team as a whole looks sound.

Women's 6-foot-2 center Andrijana Kerkez, and forward Ani Mecca have bolstered this year's roster. Kerkez is a solid force in the post, and Mecca can drain the mid-range jumper. Plus, the bench appears deep and coach Seja looks comfortable in subbing in all her players when necessary.

Valley looks to go far – This season and beyond. Well, at least for the ladies ...

The men's and women's teams will play their last home games of the season on Saturday. The women will tip off at 5:30 p.m., the men at 7:30 p.m.

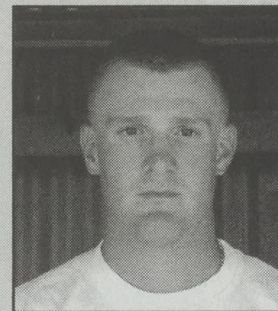


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ARTAK AVYAZYAN AND LAGINA PHILLIPS

Stars of the Week

PHOTOS BY DAVID ELIAS

Baseball



Bobby Phillips Pitcher

Threw seven innings with no earned runs, three-hits and five-strikeouts in the game against Cerritos

Women's Basketball



Saida Johnson

Freshman
Scored 28 points in the game against Santa Monica College

Men's Basketball



Charles Streater

Freshman
Scored 23 points in the game against Santa Monica College

LAVC SCORES

Men's Basketball vs. Bakersfield College
63-58 (L) 2/11/06

Women's Basketball vs. Bakersfield College
85-69 (L) 2/11/06

LAVC SCHEDULE

Wednesday 2/15/06
No Scheduled Games

Thursday 2/16/05
Softball @ Allan Hancock 2:30 p.m.
Baseball @ Moorpark 2:00 p.m.

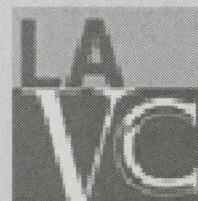
Friday 2/17/06
Baseball vs. Moorpark 2:00 p.m.
Swimming @ Citrus 12:00 p.m.
Track & Field @ Moorpark 2:00 p.m.

Saturday 2/18/06
Baseball @ Moorpark 12:00 p.m.

Sunday 2/19/06
No Scheduled Games

Monday 2/20/06
Softball vs. Saddleback 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday 2/21/06
Softball @ Moorpark 2:30 p.m.



For more sport photos and stories, please visit
www.lavalleystar.com

SOFTBALL



DANIEL KANE / VALLEY STAR

NOT CLOSE ENOUGH - Lady Monarchs lose 4-2 to Santa Barbara Vaqueros; Valley's Kali Shepherd about to tag Santa Barbara's Aliana Gonzales as she slides into second. The next game is against Allan Hancock on Thursday Feb.16.

Sports Briefs

Baseball

The Valley College baseball season has begun as the team participated in the annual Casey Stengel tournament last weekend. The team posted a 1-3 record for the tournament, pushing their overall record to 4-7-1.

The non-conference games showcased some of the emerging stars on the team, such as right-handed pitcher Bobby Phillips. Phillips threw seven innings and had no earned runs in a three-hit, five-strikeout performance for the Monarchs in a 5-1 win over Cerritos Saturday. Catcher/Outfielder Garrett Shimmamoto added two RBIs to propel the team to victory.

After bolstering a 23-16 record last season, the team is back to regain their composure following a slow start. They will open conference play at Moorpark College on Thursday. The conference home opener is set for Friday with a rematch against Moorpark.

Track

The men and women's track team got their season off to a good start in last Friday's meet against Moorpark, Glendale and host College of the Canyons.

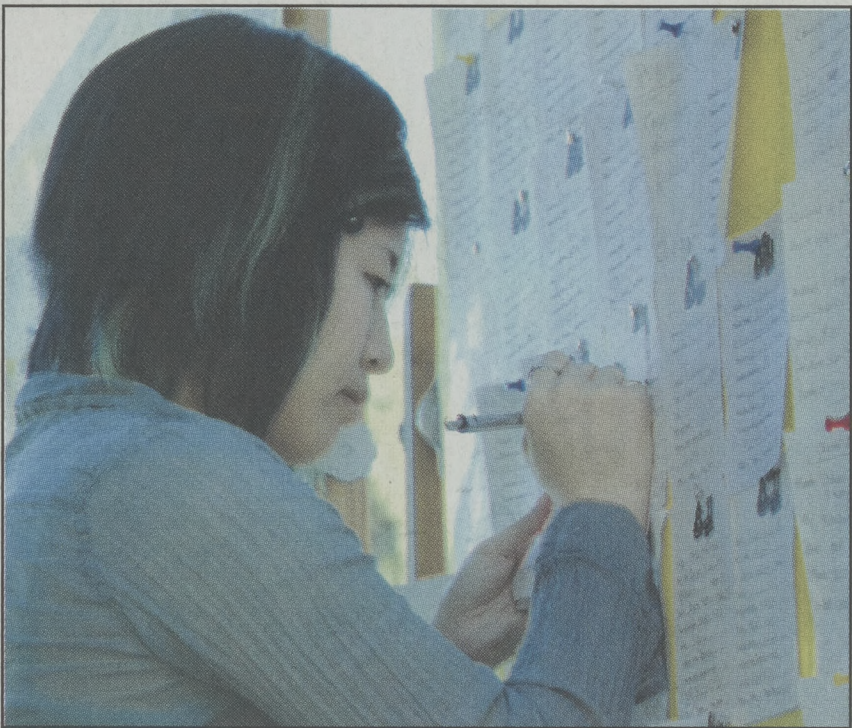
The women's team, who started off their season minus some of their top players due to injury, placed in most of the events they entered. Freshman sprinter and long jumper Cherise Mariano placed second in the long jump with a jump of 15'8.5." Freshman Pardis Sobouti was named athlete of the week because she placed second in the 100 meter hurdles and made up an 80 meter gap in the third leg of the 4x400 meter relay.

The men's athlete of the week, Bryan Gonzalez, threw the javelin 120" and the shot-put 38'9." The runners also excelled with the 4x400 meter team having a time of 3:39.1.

The Monarchs will have their next meet against Allan Hancock, Cuesta and host Moorpark at 2 p.m. Friday.

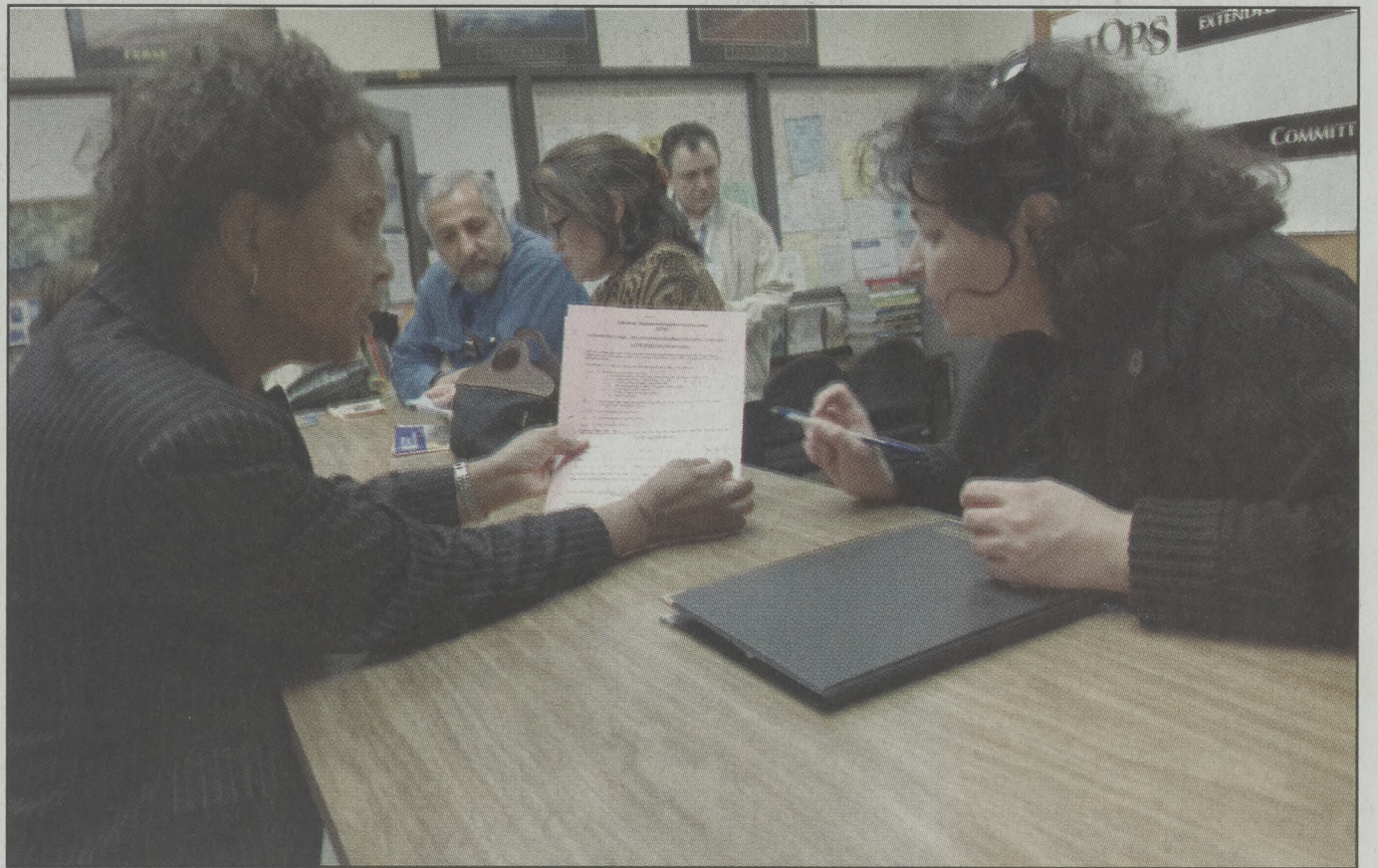
GALLERY

6



BOOKING IT - Ima Kuroda posts book information during the ASU sponsored used book sale.

MELANIE SALDAÑA / VALLEY STAR



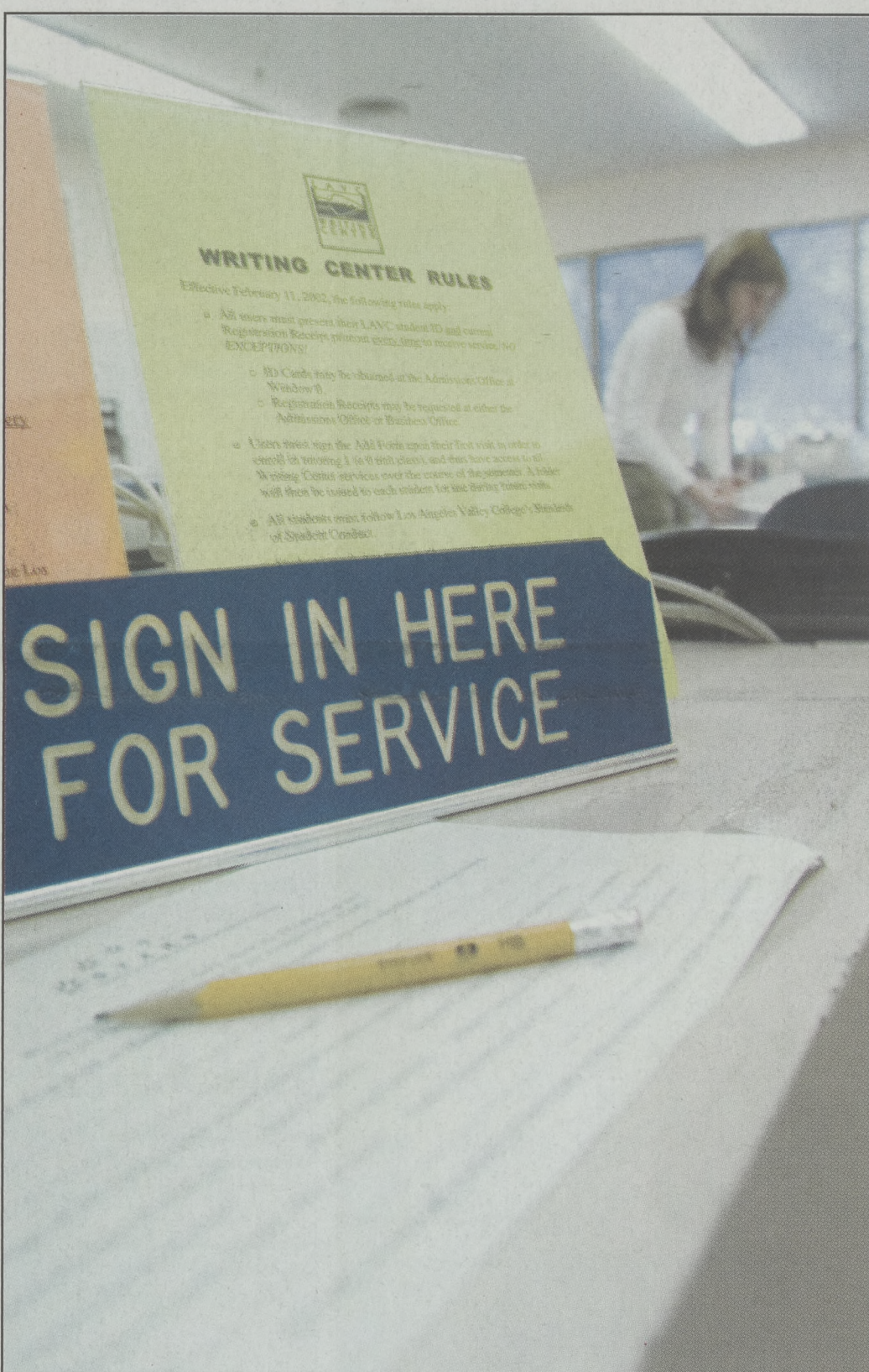
EOPS - Doris Richardson, Director of Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), runs the state funded program that is designed to help economically and educationally disadvantaged students achieve their educational goals.

ALEX FAYVIL / VALLEY STAR

Spring (Semester) in the Air

Photos by Alex Fayvil, Maria Low and Melanie Saldaña
Text by Melanie Saldaña

Ahhh, the first weeks of the semester! A fresh start. A clean slate. A study in the art of grueling lines, lines and more lines. Students are lining up to take advantage of services offered at Valley College.



THE WRITING CENTER - Located in the Humanities Building, Rooms 100 & 102. With emphasis on the helping students become better writers, the Center is geared to assist with any writing assignment.

ALEX FAYVIL / VALLEY STAR



TRiO - Luisa Cortez-Ortiz, TRiO/Student Support Services Counselor, provides valuable Academic and Career Counseling to students. TRiO is designed to help low-income, 1st generation college students or disabled students achieve a college education.

ALEX FAYVIL / VALLEY STAR



FINANCIAL AID - Valley student Kathy Y. Ferguson is waiting for Jorge Medrano to process her financial aid applications.

MARIA LOW / VALLEY STAR